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NANTWICH

March 2026





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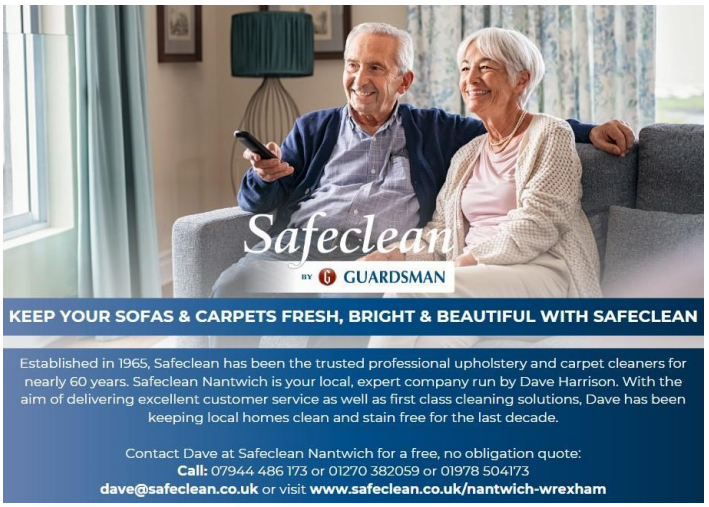
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Front cover: *Staff outing: Gail (Parish Administrator) and Linda (Verger) visiting Crewe, Nantwich & District RSPCA Branch looking to adopt their new cats (www.rspca.org.uk/local/crewe-nantwich-and-district-branch).*



From the Rector

"There is no time like Spring, when life's alive in everything" *(Christina Rossetti)*

Such is the hope throughout Lent, that by Easter we may have grown to become more alive. In the coming weeks each member of St. Mary's will therefore receive an invitation to ask ourselves how we are growing, in three ways:

Growing in Faith
It is good to have regular habits in the practice of our faith but we should be alert to how much we are open to growth. Do you find yourself asking new questions? Would it help to be stretched in reading something new? Would a course, or home group, or prayer group be helpful? Have you not yet been confirmed or received Communion? Would it help to attend a different kind of service occasionally? Would you like to meet to talk through some questions?

Growing in Service
As Christians we are called to service, which may be in our homes, our employment, or volunteering in wider society. The life of St. Mary's also relies on the generosity of many people giving time in various fields of service. These have their own reward through the use of our gifts and by providing companionship and mutual support. The opportunities are many: singing, bell-ringing, lesson reading, stewarding, altar serving, flower arranging, housekeeping, DIY-ing, visiting, praying … to name a few. Would you like to know more?

Growing in Generosity
The three forms of growth listed here are interrelated and overlapping, and it is hardly possible to grow in one area as a church without growing in them all. A sign of the strength of our faith and service as a church is therefore the level of financial giving. By far the largest portion of income at St. Mary's is that provided by those who give in a regular and planned way. If you do this already, when did you last review the amount you give? If you are new to St. Mary's, would you like to know more? The money we give is part of our worship, so we sometimes pray together in church saying, "All things come from you, and of your own do we give you".

This Spring, may God make you more alive, and more life-giving.

Mark Hart (Rector)

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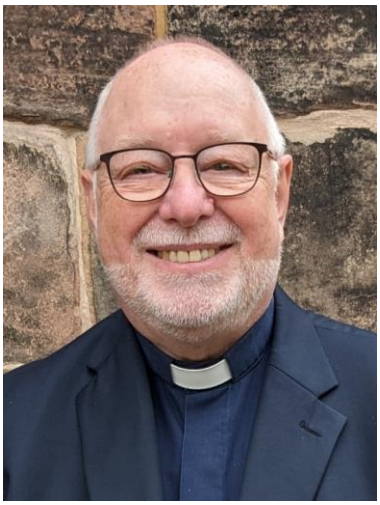
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Spring Cleaning

Don't you just love a good spring clean? I love the fresh smell, the tidiness, creating order out of chaos, and the ways things sparkle and gleam!

When I was a Franciscan friar, we were always "encouraged" to have a good clear-out and a thorough spiritual spring-clean during the days of Lent. We were always meant to "travel light" - and so this annual clear-out was a way of ensuring that we carried only one suitcase with us when we moved. Saint Francis of Assisi was always anxious to obey the words Jesus spoke to his disciples when he sent them out: *"Take nothing for the journey-no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt …"* (Luke 9: 3)

The fact is most of us have a tendency to accumulate more than we need. We begin the year with a little token de-cluttering, but within a very short time one pen has become two, a single pair of shoes has somehow transformed into two or three pairs … and we'd better not say anything about all those items we never really notice in our store cupboards or drawers!

Lent is meant to remind us of our total dependence on God but our possessions often hide that fact from us. We rely on **them** rather than **Him**. Taking a cool look at what we have, and assessing it in the light of what we **need** is a very humbling exercise. During the forty days of Lent we must travel light. It is quite difficult to pray in a room that is over-stuffed with clutter. In the same way, it is difficult to focus on God if we are surrounded with unnecessary abundance.

And the time of Lent was also about penance, and clearing out those things which weigh on our minds, and which have a habit of standing between us and God. Lent was always the time for a *spiritual* spring-clean; a time of confession and of developing good habits that restore our relationship with God and with others around us.

If you haven't done anything yet to observe a "good and holy Lent" then it's not too late. The whole of this month leading up to Easter on 5th April is within the Lenten season … why not start today? You'll feel so much better for having had a good clear-out, both physically and spiritually.

Best wishes,

Church News

Lent Course 2026: Come and See

Pick up a flyer from church for full details. Now running in church on Tuesdays at 2pm and repeated on Wednesdays at 7.30pm, five consecutive weeks up to and including 24th/25th March. Join in any sessions as you can make it.

Lego Club

A St. Mary's Lego Club is being set up by Adam Kirkpatrick (attends 8am). Open to children aged 6-15, it will provide a safe social space to build Lego, in a calm environment, working in small teams or individually. It will run on Mondays 4-5pm in the Parish Hall. If you would like to offer your help in assisting to run this club along with club leader Adam then please contact the Parish Office. Adam runs Discover Social Skills which provides safe social spaces for neurodivergent pupils.

Concert Stewards

The concerts organised by St. Mary's are a helpful source of income and rely on volunteers attending as stewards. If you may occasionally be able to help please let the Rector or the Parish Office know. You get free entry!

Electoral Roll

Are you a member of St. Mary's Roll? If so, you don't need to do anything this year - the roll is being revised, not renewed. A list of the names of current members is posted at the back of the church. If you attend St. Mary's and you're not on the roll, please take and complete a form. The roll provides a very useful record of St. Mary's church members, as well as being the body of people who may take part in the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (to be held in church on **Wednesday, 22nd April**, 7.30pm). Please note that a list of the names of current members of the Electoral Roll is posted on the notice board at the back of church.

Christmas Tree Festival

The 2025 Christmas Tree Festival raised a total of £24,512. Thank you to St. Luke's Hospice, our partners in the event, for all their hard work and expertise, and thank you to all from St. Mary's who worked hard over the weekend. The total raised is divided: £18,384 to St. Luke's Hospice, £6,128 to St. Mary's.

Church Shop

The Church Shop is open again with St. Mary's branded goods and a selection of greeting cards. Please do support us.

Nativity costumes

Do you have any nativity costumes that you don't know what to do with? We'd love to add them to our collection for Crib services and All Age Nativity. Any condition/size, headpieces or crooks – anything gratefully received! Please drop off to the Parish Office or leave in church.

Quiz Night

Over 60 people attended a quiz night in the Parish Hall, organised superbly by the social committee. On tables of four or five, collective memories were put to the test over advertising slogans from recent times and decades ago. "Put a tiger in your tank", "A ? a day helps you work, rest and play", etc.



Then there were ten rounds of ten questions under a wide range of topics - all called by Geoffrey. Phew we were mentally exhausted by the end! In a good way of course.

The quizzing was interjected with a fabulous, home-cooked chilli dinner (meat, veggie and low spice versions). Andrea, Caryl, Wendy and Judith had excelled in preparing the large quantities of food needed to feed us all. A big thank you to them, to Andrea and Judith for serving and doing the majority of the washing up and to Geoffrey for the quiz. It's great we have the facilities to hold such events and the people willing to organise them. The committee was really grateful for all the help at the end - the chairs were whisked away in no time. However, there's always room for more help on the day. If you'd be able to help with future events please get in touch with Andrea Howell-Jones or Caryl Boxhall.

Annie Coombs

Dorothy Relton RIP



There's no process of canonisation in the Church of England but I do wonder if we should identify our own local saints; people widely recognised for the brightness of God's light shining through them, while being made of frail flesh like the rest of us.

I've known many candidates in Nantwich, but few as outstanding as Dorothy Relton, who died early in the morning of Sunday, 18th January, in time for the news to reach the congregations of St. Mary's; reminiscent of the tales of St. Hilda's death reaching local monasteries in time for morning prayers. Dorothy grew up in Hartlepool, and at school was a member of St. Hilda's house.

Dorothy qualified as a nurse, but after a gap in employment while her three children were young, retrained and taught food technology, and SEN students, at Stockton & Billingham Technical College.

In 1993, shortly after retirement, Dorothy and her husband Derek (who died in 2019) moved to Nantwich. At first she was giving a helping hand with various children's activities, but gradually took on more responsibility at St. Mary's.

Dorothy became an altar server, and gave 25 years of attentive ministry to clergy and people, and constant encouragement to young servers, retiring reluctantly in 2024.

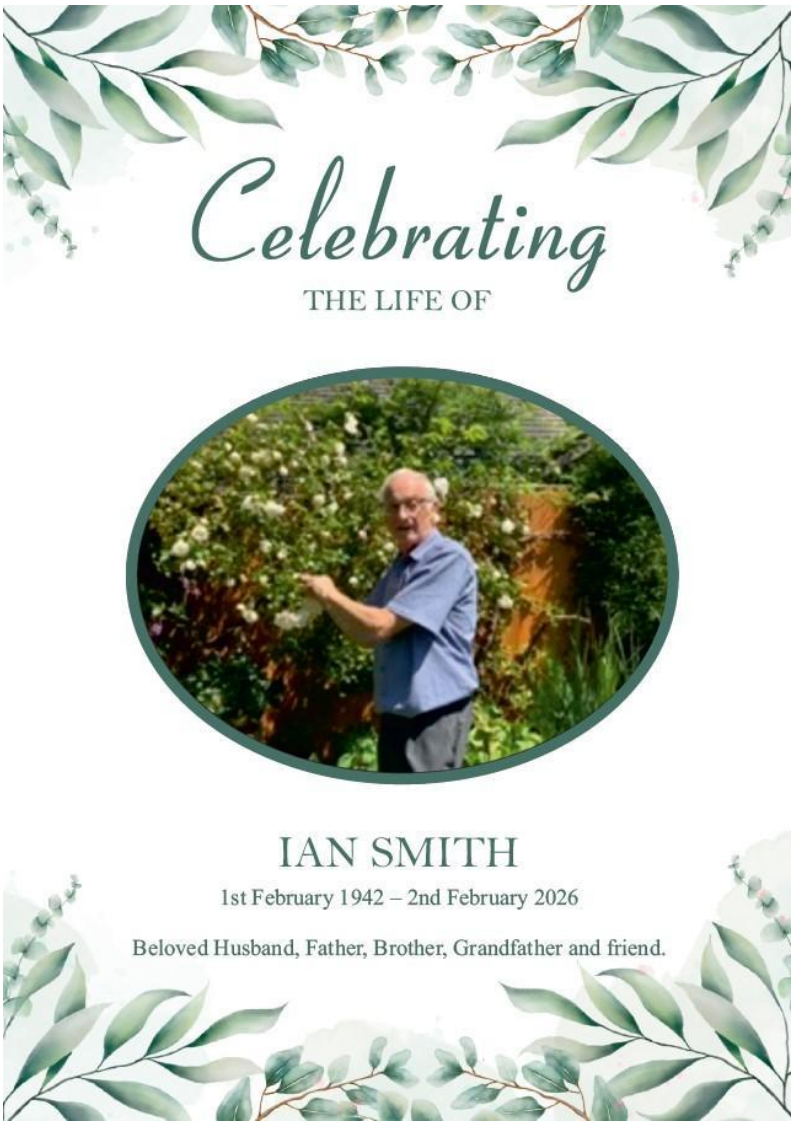
In 1999 Dorothy became the hub of the baptism ministry, developing the work in new ways, including visiting families in their homes. Dorothy paid great attention to detail, and took time to understand the needs of individual families. She had a gift for understanding people and their adversities, having lived with great courage and strength through her own difficulties over many years.

For 20 years Dorothy continued in this role, meeting many hundreds of families, and becoming a well-known figure in the town, hailed in the street, and even invited to 18th birthday parties by families who had kept in touch. After handing over responsibility to Jo McCauley in 2019, Dorothy gave support for as long as she could, continuing to attend baptisms, and welcome evenings.

Nothing brought more joy to Dorothy than to see children thrive, in body, mind and spirit. Every welcome she gave to a little one was a welcome to her Lord, in whose presence she is now herself welcomed and at rest.

Mark Hart

Ian Smith RIP



The funeral of Ian Smith took place on Tuesday, 17th February at St. Mary's Church. Ian was a much loved member of the church, and as a keen and skilled photographer he contributed to the parish magazine for many years.

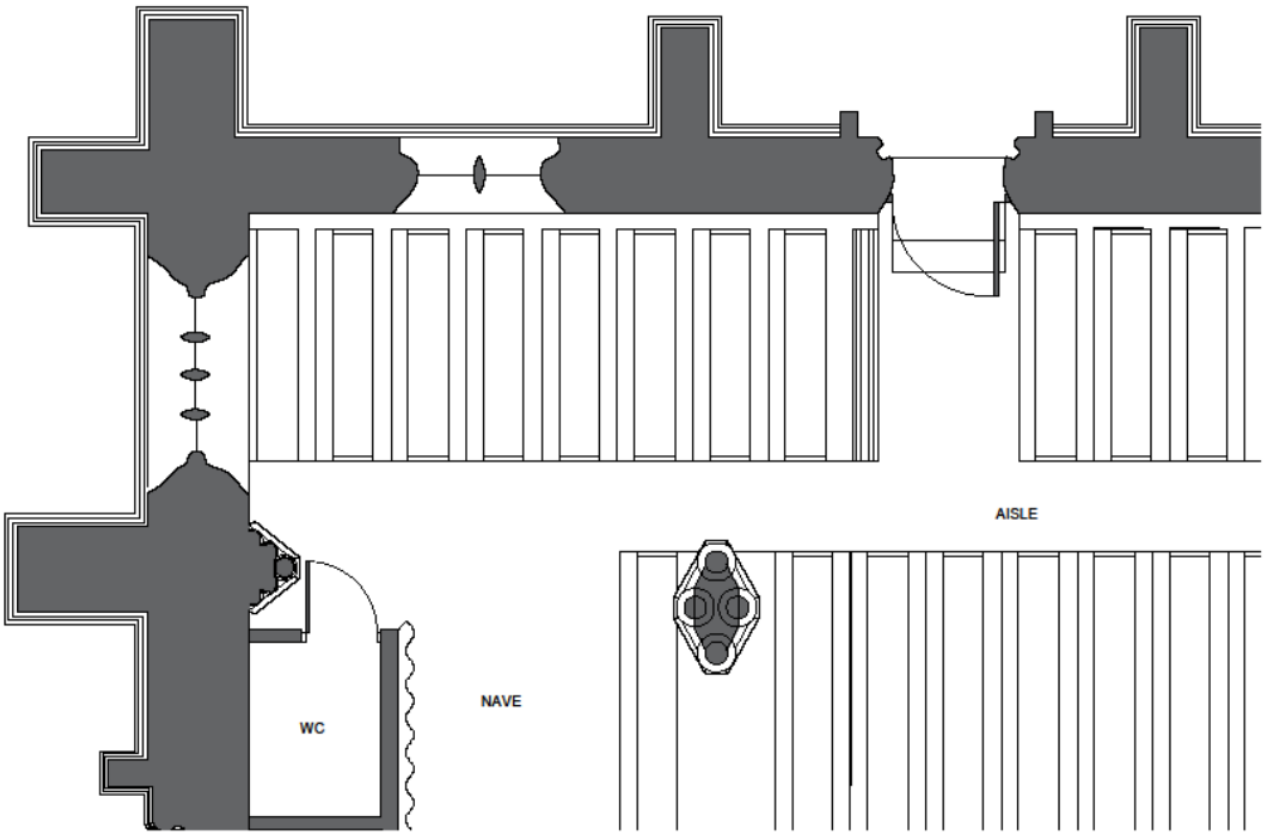
Ian was born in Luton and grew up in Liverpool. After training as an engineer he worked in Conway for many years, living there with his wife Myra (who died in 1997) and their two children, Brian and Christa.

It was at a musical evening in the Parish Hall where Ian (now living in Nantwich) met Penny, and they were married at St. Mary's by Peter Chantry in 2005. Ian and Penny enjoyed many concerts together (especially at St. Mary's), and visits to family in Australia and New Zealand.

Until very recently, Ian, with Penny, was the regular steward for the closing period on a Saturday afternoon. Hundreds of visitors have benefitted from his gentle manner, expert knowledge, and enthusiasm for the building, especially the chancel which he loved most of all. As the chancel symbolises a renewed Eden, so may Ian now rest in peace and rise in glory.

Visitor Centre

It has long been proposed, and agreed in principle by the PCC, that the north west corner of the nave should be developed to provide an open area with shop display facilities, tables, and basic kitchen facilities.



North west of nave, as existing.

This would involve the removal of the pews against the north wall from the west wall to the north door, and the removal of the back pew on the north side of the nave centre aisle, forwards to replace the pew in front of it, lining up with the back pew on the south side of the centre aisle. Stone flooring would replace the wooden base where the pews were.

The project has been in abeyance for some time, but Mark Appleton has kindly agreed now to take the lead, liaising with the architect and the Diocesan Advisory Committee, and with the church stakeholders. Existing plans may need to be modified, and proposals will be published in due course. A substantial proportion of the funding is already in place but an appeal for funds will be necessary. Watch this space.



Mark Appleton, Project Leader.

Encounter Supper with Rachael Rivers

At Encounter Supper on 15th February we welcomed Rachael Rivers and her husband John. Formerly members of the 9.30am congregation, Rachael is now Licensed Lay Minister (Reader) at St. Mary's, Wistaston and St. Luke's, Willaston.



After grace from Angie Bartlett and a delicious meal around a communal table decorated with spring flowers, Rachael shared her testimony, taking us back ten years to when she joined St. Mary's from an independent evangelical church where she had regularly preached and led worship.

A seminal moment for Rachael came when she attended a diocesan event, "Called to Serve" and learnt about the role of Reader and realised that this would allow her to lead services and preach, the two things she most wanted to do. However, the demands of a new role in her career as a teacher and covid lockdowns meant that she had to be patient for the right time to start the Foundations for Ministry course.

On completion of the course Rachael felt called to training as a Reader and this involved a placement at St. Mary's, Wistaston where Rev. Mike Turnbull ministers to two churches by himself. Rev. Mike and the congregations were very appreciative of Rachael's work and she greatly enjoyed it. This presented a dilemma; should she return to Nantwich or stay in Wistaston? After prayerful consideration and the support of Rev. Mark Hart, common sense led Rachael to transfer to Wistaston where she completed her training and was licensed in October 2024.

Rachael finds her role very rewarding and currently leads Sunday worship, preaches, takes assemblies and RE lessons in local schools and runs Messy Church and Alpha courses. She is indebted to John for his support in driving her to training and reading her sermons. Rachael shared one of her favourite Bible passages: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." *(Proverbs 3: 5-6)*

Carole Tilt

"Give to Gain"

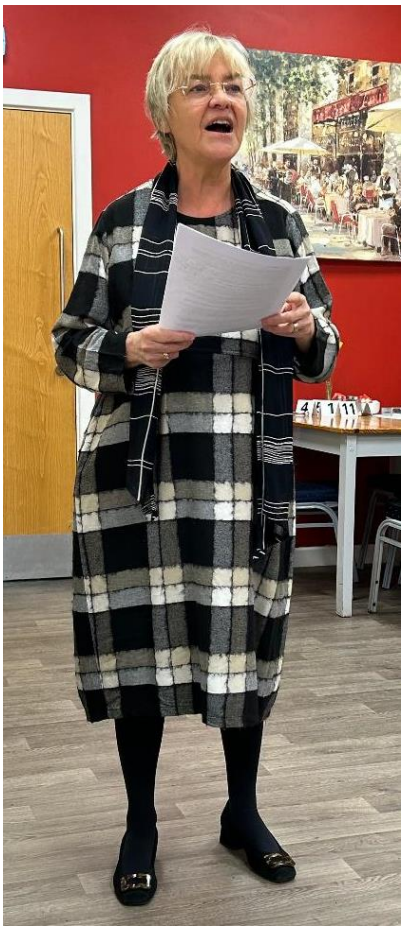
International Women's Day (IWD) has been around since 1911. This year it falls on Sunday, 8th March. It is for all who care about gender equality, celebrate women's achievements, raise awareness about discrimination and take action to forge gender parity.

Everyone can support advancement for women and girls by calling out stereotypes, challenging discrimination, questioning bias, celebrating women's success, and more.

The 2026 IWD year-long campaign is called "Give to Gain". It emphasises the power of reciprocity and support. There are many ways to give in order to advance and support women. Give respect/visibility/knowledge/justice/resources/protection/a voice/celebration/mentoring/role models/opportunities/safety/access/time.

At St. Mary's we are celebrating women with a Quarter Peal attempt at 4.30pm on 8th March by an all-female band of ringers.

The Almshouses of Nantwich and "the Excellent Sermon"



The February breakfast speaker was Amanda James, who is the chair (known as treasurer) of the Nantwich Almshouse charities. She gave us a fascinating canter through the history of our local almshouses. Nantwich has the most almshouses of any Cheshire town, even Chester.

The different almshouses described below were all administered by different charities which suffered from age frailty and death of original trustees. In the late 1950s these charities were amalgamated into one Trusteeship.

The Trustees now administer 48 units and retain the services of a clerk who deals with administration and accounts, a caretaker who checks properties regularly and there is a warden call button for emergencies.

The accommodation is offered to persons over 60, in need (not necessarily financial) in accordance with the terms of the charities, with preference to those living in Nantwich and South Cheshire.

Sir Edmund Wright Almshouses – previously London Road, now behind the Beam Street Almshouses: Sir Edmund Wright was born in Hospital Street. His baptism is recorded as 24th November 1573 in St. Mary's Church. He became a grocer and a member of the Grocers' Company and in 1641 he became an Alderman of the City of London, then Lord Mayor.

In 1638 he conveyed his newly erected almshouses in Nantwich to 13 trustees by deed. They were for the benefit of six poor men, over 50, from the town, who belonged to the Church of England. In the 1970s a decision was made to move (brick by brick) the, by then dilapidated, Edmund Wright cottages onto the site of the Crewe Almshouses.

In his deed, Sir Edmund Wright commanded that each year his trustees should commemorate his baptism by attending "divine service" at St. Mary's in the morning of the 24th November to listen to "an excellent sermon" delivered by the Rector (no pressure Mark!). In the evening the Trustees enjoy a dinner at which traditional toasts are proposed; a custom which continues today.



Sir John Crewe Almshouses – Beam Street: Sir John Crewe, the son of Ranulph Crewe who built Crewe Hall, was born in Nantwich. He was a prominent Whig politician who served as MP for Stafford and for Cheshire.

Between 1677 and 1748 there was a House of Correction (a type of prison for reforming individuals convicted of minor crimes) in Nantwich. In 1767 Sir John Crewe bought it and converted it to almshouses for "decayed tradesmen".

The Harriet Hope Block: A legacy from the estate of Miss Harriet Hope, with various grants and public subscription, enabled the Trustees to convert the Crewe Almshouses into 14 single units, erect four new double unit flats known as the Harriet Hope block, together with the six Wright Almshouses.

Wood and Garnett Almshouses - Manor Road and Colleys Lane (Wistaston); In 1923 sisters, Sarah Jane Wood and Mary Ann Garnett who lived in Willaston left a substantial sum of money as a charity for elderly, deserving people in Willaston and Nantwich. Their wills left instruction for gifting money to build a new ward at the Crewe memorial hospital, a nurses' home at Nantwich Cottage Hospital and the building of the Wood and Garnett Almshouses, constructed in 1929.

Sir Roger Wibraham Almshouses - Top of Welsh Row, Acton Churchyard and The Cheshire Cat: The Wilbraham family is an old Cheshire family. Sir Roger was a successful lawyer and served as Solicitor General for Ireland under Queen Elizabeth and King's Surveyor of the Court of Wards and Liveries under King James. In 1614 he bought Dorfold Estate and built several almshouses in Nantwich.

Jubilee Almshouses – Wall Lane: In 2000 to 2001, the Trustees funded five new bungalow units for the disabled in Wall Lane, on land adjacent to the Wood and Garnett bungalows in Manor Road.

Richardson Homes Almshouses – Richardson Close (Shavington): Harry Richardson was a wealthy philanthropist living in Wybunbury who established Richardson Homes Charity in 1966. In 2008 the Trustees assumed responsibility for the charity, comprising three bungalow double units. A three-bedroom bungalow gifted by John Nield in Shavington is also administered by this charity.

Charity of William Hodgkin: The Trustees also administer the Charity of William Hodgkin which benefits young persons under the age of 25 who are in need of help to further their careers and education.

I don't think any of us knew how many almshouses there are, or what a varied, philanthropic history they have. This is a definite eye-opener and a trigger to be observant when walking round Nantwich, eg. the small plaque on The Cheshire Cat. Thank you to Amanda for such a fascinating "canter".

Your Magazine

If you are reading this article, then it is because you have an interest in St. Mary's Church, Nantwich.

St. Mary's Church Magazine is a monthly publication, and has been produced in a number of formats over many years. The effect of the pandemic, 6 years ago, gave us the opportunity to look at the ways we do things and what can we do better. The result of this was to replace the larger "THIS MONTH" with an A5 size magazine to be issued free of charge. By bringing the printing "in house" it meant that a large print version could be available upon request, and also available electronically.

Today, in order to meet different needs, the magazine is still produced in an A5 format, a large print edition and an electronic version, thus ensuring that all can enjoy and benefit from its content.

For members of the community who are unable to attend church in person, approximately 100 copies are hand delivered, throughout the Nantwich area, by a team of dedicated volunteers. This personal delivery service helps maintain a vital link with those who may feel isolated or unable to participate in church life directly.

For individuals who live outside the local area but still have a connection or interest in our church, copies of the magazine are posted to them to keep them informed and involved. The electronic version also allows readers further afield to stay up to date with church news, events, reflections, and community activities.



People's needs and wants change over time, so are your needs being met? Is the version that you are reading today suitable for you personally? We do hope so, but if not please contact us and we shall do our utmost to meet your needs.

Our aim is to ensure accessibility for all readers. We hope you enjoy reading it.

The Magazine Committee

Mothers' Union News

Our annual appeal for donations of toiletries and underwear items for Cheshire Without Abuse is now closed. We had an incredible response from the members and church family and friends to the appeal this year. Thank you so much to all who donated items. We plan to deliver the items on Tuesday, 24th February.



A small sample of donations received.

On Saturday, 14th March we will be gathering in church to make up Daffodil posies. These will be given out to congregations the following day to celebrate Mothers' Day. It's all hands to the pump that morning and many hands make light work of this job. Our theme of Join in, Join us, is very appropriate at this time. So, if you are free, come and "Join in" and if you are able to bring some greenery with you, all the better.

On Friday, 20th March our speaker is Paul Ramsey who will be talking to us about Lent.

On Wednesday, 25th March at 11am, St. Mary's will host the Annual Deanery Lady Day Service. There will be refreshments after the service. All welcome to attend.

Copies of our programme of events for 2026 can be found in the Church Magazine rack.

THE MOTHERS' UNION
Christian concern for families worldwide

Parish Church of St. Mary, Nantwich
Mothers' Union

Programme for 2026

Monthly meetings are usually held on the third Friday of each month at 2.15pm in the Parish Hall.

Further information about special events will be given out at Branch Meetings.

MU Secretary
Cathie Riddell (07913 007041)

Programme Secretary (& contact no.)
Clare White (07341 085818)

Theme for the year:
"Join Us and Join In"

MU Charity No. 221412

News in Pictures



A Quarter Peal of 1260 Bob Doubles was rung, in 45 minutes, prior to Compline for the Feast of Candlemas on Sunday, 1st February.

For Diana Boyles this was a first quarter "inside", that is, not on the first bell, nor the last bell (6th in this case), a significant step of progress in bell ringing, achieved here at the first attempt, and shortly before her birthday. Congratulations, Diana!

L to R (rope number in brackets):
Nicola Basford (3), Paul Cheshire (4),
Stefan Zientek (5, conductor), Diana Boyles (2),
Mark Hart (6), David Allman (1).

Holly Holy Day 2026





This year's commemoration of the Battle of Nantwich (25th January 1644) took place on Saturday, 24th January. The Sealed Knot gathered around the churchyard for the prayers and wreath laying, led by the Rector of Nantwich and the Vicar of Acton. After the wreath laying a minute's silence was kept, ending with the gun salute.



Dr. Ian Atherton, Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History at Keele University, gave a very well-received lecture on the Civil War to a full church.



Mission Support Group

Thank you to Angie Bartlett of the Mission Support Group for preparing this informative display in the south transept on the work of our CMS mission partners, Andrew & Lisa Peart, in Bolivia. Please go and have a look.

Congratulations ...

to The Rev. Rob Icke, a member of St. Mary's, Nantwich before his ordination, who was collated by the Bishop of Lichfield as Rector of Stone St. Michael & St. Wulfad with Aston St. Saviour on 28th January.





And to The Rev. Anne Lawson, Vicar of The Cross Country Parishes of Acton with Worleston, Church Minshull and Wettenhall who was made an Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral on Sunday, 1st February.

Prayer of the Month

> ***PREVENT us, O Lord**, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

This is one of my favourite prayers, set in the Book of Common Prayer, for use in Morning and Evening Prayer; and in the Communion order if ending at the Offertory without Communion; and in the Ordination services for Deacons, Priests and Bishops. After the Lord's Prayer, it is therefore the most ubiquitous.

Modern versions begin "Go before us, O Lord", making plain the old meaning of "Prevent" used in this context, but as so often, what is gained in clarity is lost in rhythm. The prayer is a beautifully flowing translation and adaptation by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer of an ancient Latin collect, first appearing in his 1549 Prayer Book.

There's no prayer like it to give a sense that God is ahead of us before we arrive, behind us to help us move forwards, the source from which we come, the end to which we move, and the context in which we live.

Mark Hart



At a prayer station at the All Together service in February, we were invited to colour the image of the lily, take it home and pray:

> *"Thank you for reminding me today that I am more important and amazing to you than the beauty of the flowers that grow. Thank you for everything you provide for me every day."*

Forthcoming Events

Community Choir

Join us for an evening of singing for fun at the next Community Choir Singing on **Monday, 2nd March**, 7-8.30pm in church. Sign up at the back of church or contact Alison Phillips 07891 620678.

Church Walk

There is a Church Walk on **Saturday, 7th March** at 11am. The route follows the Shropshire Union and Llangollen Canals via Acton, Hurleston and Swanley. Total walk is approximately 5 miles and uses canal towpaths, public footpaths and some roads. There will be a stop for a picnic and a short reflection. Everyone is welcome. Please book with Carole Tilt directly or via the Parish Office *office@stmarysnantwich.org.uk*

March Breakfast

The March breakfast will take place at The Tea Lounge at Nantwich Football Stadium at 8.30am on **Saturday, 21st March**. The speaker will be Tim Emerton, Head of Fundraising at the Boaz Trust, a Manchester-based charity supporting people facing homelessness after claiming asylum (supported by St. Mary's Mission Support). As usual, sign up on the sheet at the back of church or phone the office by midday on Wednesday, 18th March. If you book, we need to pay, so have to ask you to pay if you fail to turn up.

Breakfast dates for your diary

The 2026 breakfasts will take place as usual, in The Tea Lounge at the Nantwich Football Stadium, at 8.30am on the following Saturdays:

18th April	19th September
16th May	17th October
20th June	28th November

Holy Week and Easter

See p. 32 for details of all our Holy Week and Easter Services.

Spring Fair

Please could you consider donating any unwanted gifts to our Spring Fair, to be held on **Saturday, 21st March**, 10am-2pm, and drop them off at the Parish Office. We would appreciate tombola items, jigsaws, novels, handbags, scarves, jewellery, nearly new, bric-a-brac, toys and games.

Slowly Communion

Here at St. Mary's during 2025 there were opportunities to join a service of Slowly Communion. Did you think this was a special service only for certain people? Did you wonder what it was? Or perhaps you thought it would be a very long service and you didn't have the time. Well read on, as this short article should answer these questions and others.

Slowly Communion is an ordinary Holy Communion service but taken at a slower pace. Not only is the litany said more slowly, there are pauses for silence. This gives time for contemplation and reflection on the worship we are offering to God whilst leaving room for God's response.

Since a shorter form of the litany is used and there are no hymns the service takes about 1 to 1¼ hours, about the same length as usual services.

In case you think this sounds daunting let me share my experience. Many of you will know that I regularly attend the 10.45am service on a Sunday. I value this service and get much from it. However, I must confess I do not concentrate 100% of the time and, on occasion, my mind does wander away from the service.

I was worried that this would happen even more at Slowly Communion because there would be less "happening". In fact, I find I concentrate more because the slower pace means I have time to enter into the worship and to draw more meaning from the words I am saying and hearing.

The next Slowly Communion will be on the Tuesday of Holy Week, **31st March** at 7.30pm. I would like to encourage you to come along and experience a different way of preparing for Easter, one which can enhance the other activities St. Mary's offers during Holy Week.

Nick Hutt

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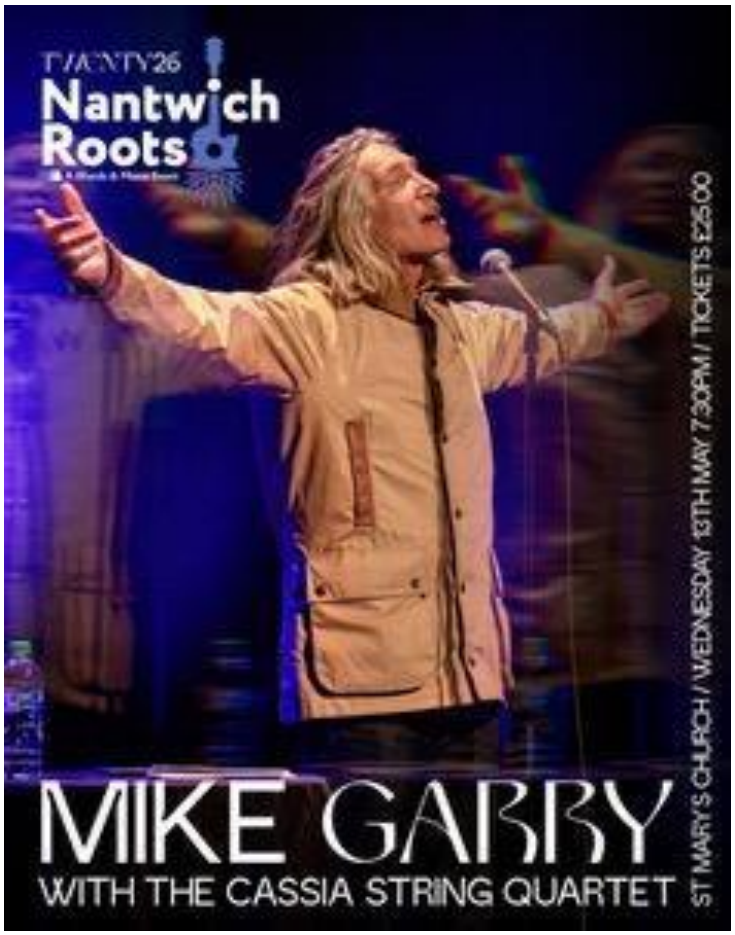
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See also "Special Services & Events Calendar" on p. 31.

Difference and Cooperation

Why does it seem to take me three times as long to do anything than it used to? Younger people get things done much more quickly than do the average older ones. This often causes frustration all around. Sometimes the younger ones rush around and do not complete their tasks to the best of their abilities. Often older people seem to take a long time to complete anything. Many older people are confused by our modern telephone systems. We cannot speak to a person, only press various numbers to move through a myriad of choices to discover the answers to questions. For example our medical practice asks people to download the NHS app into their app store. This is perhaps to ask for a repeat prescription. The younger generation says "no problem". Older people are more likely to say "where is my app store, do I have one?"

We can all look for differences but help on all sides improves the atmosphere and teaches us to value each other whatever their age or abilities. Working with others, helping each other, respecting the gifts of others is what makes us human. The gifts of others to those in need transforms the world. We know this from our own experiences and so many examples in both the Old and New Testaments.

It is the same in other faiths and elsewhere as well as in Christianity. One of the aims of Lent is self discipline, another is prayer and another is helping others by giving to charities or by giving our time to others. The same is true for followers of Islam in Ramadan. This year Lent and Ramadan are being celebrated at the same time.

The world is full of kindness. What a contrast to so many of the events described in the news media. What a joy it has been to be able to watch the Winter Olympics. Amazing achievements, beautiful scenery and international cooperation in northern Italy and surrounding countries, all brought about by thousands of people working together.

Jesus was filled with compassion in his dealing with people. He teaches us to love and respect each other. He gave examples of how we should behave. As part of our Lent observance and our preparation for Easter try reading for example the "sermon on the mount" in Matthew 5 and some of the parables in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 or the book of Ruth in the Old Testament where Ruth, a Moabite woman shows loyalty and kindness to her foreign Israelite mother in law.

Dot Roxby

From the Registers: January 2026

Holy Baptism

We welcome you into the Lord's family

18th	William Statham
18th	Dolcie-Rae Cooke

Funerals

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

2nd	Ivy Jones (87)
5th	Shirley Slack (89)
20th	George Eccleston (85)
23rd	Ian Graham (78)
30th	Alan Walker (90)

Readings for March 2026

1st March *(2nd Sunday of Lent)*	Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17 John 3: 1-17
8th March *(3rd Sunday of Lent)*	Romans 5: 1-11 John 4: 5-42
15th March *(Mothering Sunday/4th Sunday of Lent)*	Colossians 3: 12-17 John 19: 25-27
22nd March *(5th Sunday of Lent)*	Romans 8: 6-11 John 11:1-45
29th March *(Palm Sunday)*	Philippians 2: 5-11 Matthew 26: 14-30

Regular Services & Groups

The church is open for all our usual regular services, and open to visitors Monday-Saturday, 9.30am-4pm. The 9.30am and 10.45am Sunday services continue to be live-streamed on YouTube most weeks. Services and events below are held weekly unless stated otherwise, and this is the normal pattern, which may occasionally change (check the weekly notice sheet).

Sunday	8.00am	Holy Communion
	9.30am	All Age Worship (Communion 1st Sunday)
	10.45am	Holy Communion
	2.30pm	Holy Baptism (1st and 3rd Sundays)
	3.00pm	Afternoon Prayer or Holy Communion (Richmond Village)
	3.30pm	Holy Baptism (1st and 3rd Sundays)
	6.00pm	Evensong
	7.15pm	Encounter (1st & 3rd Sundays)
Monday	7.00pm	Community Choir Singing (1st Monday)
	8.00pm	Welcome to Baptism (2nd Monday)
Tuesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	10.00am	Mums & Toddlers in the Parish Hall
	3.45pm	SING!@St.Mary's in the Parish Hall
Wednesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Holy Communion
Thursday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	9.30am	Flower Arrangers in Church
	10.00am	Little Fish Toddler Group in Church
	7.00pm	Bellringing practice in the Tower
Friday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	10am-1pm	Place of Welcome in the Parish Hall
	2.00pm	Mothers' Union (3rd Friday) in the Parish Hall
	7.00pm	Choir Practice in Church
	7.30pm	FNL
Saturday	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	8.30am	St. Mary's Breakfast (3rd Saturday)
	10.00am	Concordia Practice in Church

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	Rev. Brian Statham	07724 133215
	Rev. Canon David Taylor	618936
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	pccsecretary@stmarysnantwich.org.uk	
PCC Treasurer:	Steve Lockett	628203

Parish Office:	Gail Johnson & Miriam Harvey	
(Open 9am-12noon Mon-Fri	Church Walk, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5RG	
and until 3.30pm Wed)	office@stmarysnantwich.org.uk	625268

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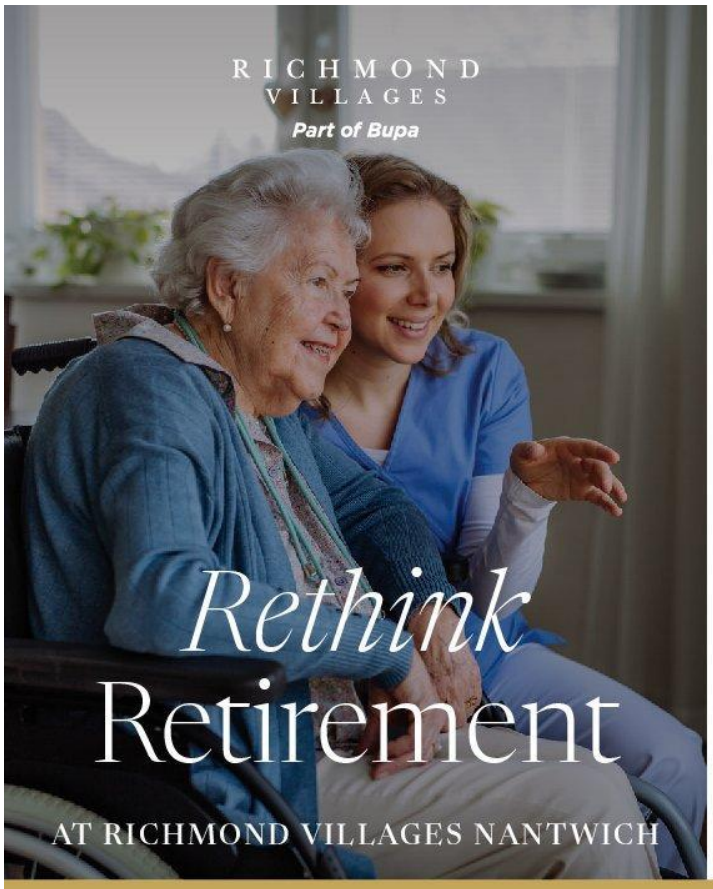
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Special Services & Events Calendar March-May 2026

March	7th	Encounter Church Walk, 11am
		Acton Operatic Society Concert in church, 7.30pm
	21st	St. Mary's Breakfast at Nantwich Football Club, 8.30am
		Spring Fair in the Parish Hall/Church grounds, 10am-2pm
		Concordia Songs for Lent in church, 12noon
		ABBA & Queen: String Quartet Tribute by candlelight in church, 7.30pm
	23rd	Easter Experience in church (4 days)
	25th	Mothers' Union Lady Day Communion Service, 11am
	28th	Nantwich Singers Passiontide Concert in church, 3pm
	29th	All Together Worship & Procession with Donkeys, 9.30am
		Palm Sunday Choral Service, 6pm
	31st	Slowly Communion, 7.30pm
April	2nd	Holy Communion and stripping of the altars, 7.30pm
	3rd	All Age Worship, 10am
		The Three Hours, 12-3pm
	5th	Dawn service, 6am
		Easter Day services, 8am, 9.30am, 10.45am
		Concordia Jazz Mass, 6pm
		Encounter in the Parish Hall, 7.15pm
	18th	St. Mary's Breakfast at Nantwich Football Club, 8.30am
		Illuminated Orchestra Concert in church, 4pm, 6.30pm, & 9pm
	19th	Eastertide Memorial Service in church, 6pm
	22nd	Annual Parochial Church Meeting in church, 7.30pm
	27th	Melanie C live performance in church, 7pm
	29th	Sound Bath in church, 7.15pm
May	3rd	Encounter Supper in the Parish Hall, 7.15pm
	13th	Mike Garry with the Cassia String Quartet in church, 7pm
	14th	Ascension Day Holy Communion, 8am & 7.30pm
	16th	St. Mary's Breakfast at Nantwich Football Club, 8.30am
		Cheshire Police Band in the Well, 11.30am
	17th	Social Committee Welcome Tea in Parish Hall, 3.30pm
	23rd	Encounter Explore Day in church, 11am-4pm
	28th	Summer Lunchtime Concerts begin, Thursdays, 12.30pm

Holy Week & Easter 2026

Palm Sunday, 29th March

8am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) and the St. Matthew Passion Reading
9.30am	All Together Worship & Procession around the Square with the Donkeys
10.45am	Holy Communion and the St. Matthew Passion Reading, with the Choir
6pm	The Way of Glory: A Choral Service with Hymns, Anthems, and Readings from the Gospel according to St. John

Tuesday, 31st March

8.30am	Morning Prayer
7.30pm	Slowly Communion (meditative, held in the chancel)

Wednesday, 1st April

8.30am	Morning Prayer
11am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Maundy Thursday, 2nd April

8.30am	Morning Prayer
7.30pm	Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altars

Good Friday, 3rd April

8.30am	Morning Prayer
10am	All Age Devotional Worship
10.45am	Churches Together in Nantwich: Open Air Service (The Square)
12–3pm	The Three Hours: Readings, Hymns, Silence, and Prayers by Eric Milner-White, and 15 Organ Reflections (Via Crucis by Philip Moore) played by Simon Russell. Come any time.

Holy Saturday, 4th April

8.30am	Morning Prayer

Easter Day, Sunday 5th April

6am	Dawn Communion, preceded by the Easter Bonfire at the West Doors, followed by Breakfast
8am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
9.30am	All Age Communion & Egg Hunt, with the Worship Band
10.45am	Holy Communion with the Choir
6pm	Jazz Mass: Will Todd's Jazz Missa Brevis sung by Concordia, conducted by Alison Phillips. Piano: John Gough. Bass: Alex Liebeck. Drums. Wine & Nibbles following.